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EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

FOR THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

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At a Convention held in the city of New-York, May 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11, 1847, composed of members of the Evangelical Alliance formed in London, August, 1846, together with others who had formally declared their desire to unite with them in forming an American organization in connection with the same, "The Evangelical Alliance for the United States of America" was duly organized, and the following Preamble and Constitution were adopted.

P R E A M B L E.

The following principles, basis, and objects, were adopted by the Evangelical Alliance formed in London, August 24, 1846; namely:—

I—THE FORMATION OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

Resolved—

- 1) That this Conference, composed of professing Christians of many different denominations, all exercising the

right of private judgment, and, through common infirmity, differing among themselves in the views they severally entertain on some points, both of Christian doctrine and ecclesiastical polity, and gathered together from many and remote parts of the world, for the purpose of promoting Christian union, rejoice in making their unanimous avowal of the glorious truth, that the Church of the living God, while it admits of growth, is one Church, never having lost, and being incapable of losing, its essential unity. Not, therefore, to create that unity, but to confess it, is the design of their assembling together. One in reality, they desire also, as far as they may be able to attain it, to be visibly one; and thus, both to realize in themselves, and to exhibit to others, that a living and everlasting union binds all true believers together in the fellowship of the Church of Christ, "which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

2) That this Conference, while recognizing the essential unity of the Christian Church, feel constrained to deplore its existing divisions, and to express their deep sense of the sinfulness involved in the alienation of affection by which they have been attended, and of the manifold evils which have resulted therefrom; and to avow their solemn conviction of the necessity and duty of taking measures, in humble dependence on the divine blessing, toward attaining a state of mind and feeling more in accordance with the word and spirit of Christ Jesus.

3) That, therefore, the members of this Conference are deeply convinced of the desirableness of forming a Confederation, on the basis of great evangelical principles held in common by them, which may afford opportunity to members of the Church of Christ of cultivating brotherly love, enjoying Christian intercourse, and promoting such other objects as they may hereafter agree to pro-

cute together; and they hereby proceed to form such a Confederation, under the name of "THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE."

II—THE BASIS OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

Resolved—

1) That the parties composing the Alliance shall be such persons only as hold and maintain what are usually understood to be evangelical views, in regard to the matters of doctrine understated; namely,

- 1 The divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures.
- 2 The right and the duty of private judgment in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.
- 3 The Unity of the Godhead, and the Trinity of Persons therein.
- 4 The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall.
- 5 The incarnation of the Son of God, his work of atonement for sinners of mankind, and his mediatorial intercession and reign.
- 6 The justification of the sinner by faith alone.
- 7 The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner.
- 8 The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, with the eternal blessedness of the righteous, and the eternal punishment of the wicked.
- 9 The divine institution of the Christian ministry and the obligation and perpetuity of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

It being, however, distinctly declared; first, that this

brief summary is not to be regarded, in any formal or ecclesiastical sense, as a creed or confession, nor the adoption of it as involving an assumption of the right authoritatively to define the limits of Christian brotherhood, but simply as an indication of the class of persons whom it is desirable to embrace within the Alliance: second, that the selection of certain tenets, with the omission of others, is not to be held as implying that the former constitute the whole body of important truth, or that the latter are unimportant.

2) That this Alliance is not to be considered as an alliance of denominations, or branches of the Church, but of individual Christians, each acting on his own responsibility.

3) That in this Alliance, it is also distinctly declared, that no compromise of the views of any member, or sanction of those of others, on the points wherein they differ, is either required or expected; but that all are as free as before to maintain and advocate their religious convictions with due forbearance and brotherly love.

4) That it is not contemplated that this Alliance should assume or aim at the character of a new ecclesiastical organization, claiming and exercising the functions of a Christian Church. Its simple and comprehensive object, it is strongly felt, may be successfully promoted without interfering with, or disturbing the order of, any branch of the Christian Church to which its members may respectively belong.

5) That while the formation of this Alliance is regarded as an important step toward the increase of Christian union, it is acknowledged as a duty incumbent on all its members carefully to abstain from pronouncing any uncharitable judgment upon those who do not feel themselves in a condition to give it their sanction.

III—THE OBJECTS OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

Resolved—

1) That, inasmuch as this proposal for union originated, in a great degree, in the sense very generally entertained among Christians of their grievous practical neglect of our Lord's "new commandment" to his disciples, to "love one another," in which offense the members of the Alliance desire, with godly sorrow, to acknowledge their full participation; it ought to form one chief object of the Alliance to deepen in the minds of its own members, and, through their influence, to extend among the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ generally, that conviction of sin and short-coming in this respect, which the blessed Spirit of God seems to be awakening throughout his Church; in order that, humbling themselves more and more before the Lord, they may be stirred up to make full confession of their guilt at all suitable times, and to implore, through the merits and intercession of their merciful Head and Saviour, forgiveness of their past offenses, and divine grace to lead them to the better cultivation of that brotherly affection which is enjoined upon all who, loving the Lord Jesus Christ, are bound also to love one another, for the truth's sake which dwelleth in them.

2) That the great object of the Evangelical Alliance be, to aid in manifesting, as far as practicable, the unity which exists among the true disciples of Christ; to promote their union by fraternal and devotional intercourse; to discourage all envyings, strifes, and divisions; to impress upon Christians a deeper sense of the great duty of obeying their Lord's command, to "love one another;" and to seek the full accomplishment of His prayer, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

3) That, in furtherance of this object, the Alliance shall receive such information respecting the progress of vital religion in all parts of the world as Christian brethren may be disposed to communicate ; and that a correspondence be opened and maintained with Christian brethren in different parts of the world, especially with those who may be engaged, amidst peculiar difficulties and opposition, in the cause of the Gospel, in order to afford them all suitable encouragement and sympathy, and to diffuse an interest in their welfare.

4) That, in subserviency to the same great object, the Alliance will endeavor to exert a beneficial influence on the advancement of Evangelical Protestantism, and on the counteraction of infidelity, of Romanism, and of such other forms of superstition, error, and profaneness, as are most prominently opposed to it, especially the desecration of the Lord's day ; it being understood that the different organizations of the Alliance be left to adopt such methods of prosecuting these great ends as may to them appear most in accordance with their respective circumstances, all at the same time pursuing them in the spirit of tender compassion and love.

5) In promoting these and similar objects, the Alliance contemplates chiefly the stimulating of Christians to such efforts as the exigences of the case may demand, by publishing its views in regard to them, rather than accomplishing these views by any general organization of its own.

6) That Reports, Minutes, and other Documents, in promotion of the above objects, be published by the Alliance at the time of its meetings, or by its order afterward ; and that similar documents may be issued from time to time by its various organizations, on their own responsibility.

IV—THE ORGANIZATION OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

It was also resolved, that the members of the Alliance, in different countries, be recommended to form District Organizations in such manner as shall be most in accordance with the peculiar circumstances of each District: provided, however, first, that neither the Alliance, nor the respective District Organizations, shall be held responsible for the proceedings of any District Organization; second, that no member of any District Organization shall, as such, be a member of the Alliance; and, third, that whenever a District Organization shall be formed, the members of the Alliance, within that District, shall act collectively in its formation: and that, in furtherance of the above plan, it be recommended, for the present, that a District Organization be formed in each of the following districts, namely:—

- 1 The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.
- 2 The United States of America.
- 3 France, Belgium, and French Switzerland.
- 4 The North of Germany.
- 5 The South of Germany, and German Switzerland.
- 6 British North America.
- 7 The West Indies.

In addition to the above, the American Organization adopts the following principles, namely:—

- 1 We recognize Christian union as consisting in the professed and actual unity of the disciples of Christ in fundamental doctrinal views; in love to God, and in sympathy of feeling and mutual love to each other; and in public, reciprocal acknowledgment of each other's Christian character, and in co-operation, more or less close, in

the advancement of objects of common interest: and we accordingly recognize Christian union as having existed to a considerable extent in the American Church, both in spirit and external manifestation, long before the organization of the Alliance in London.

2 And whereas the great end, in view of which the Saviour prayed for union among his disciples, namely, that the world might believe that the Father had sent him, is as broad and comprehensive as the design of his mission itself, the necessity and advantages of union extend to every object of Christian benevolence which from its nature admits of the co-operation of Christians of different denominations.

3 That in accordance with the first and second of the Evangelical principles of the basis, it is the right and the duty of every individual man, throughout the world, to possess the word of God, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and to read and obey that word for himself, under his responsibility to God, who has given him that revelation to be a lamp to his feet and a light to his path.

4 Inasmuch as he who is to read, and understand, and believe for himself the word of God, must have time to study it, and inasmuch as God has set apart one day in seven for such uses; therefore, it is the right of every man throughout the world to enjoy, and his duty to improve, the rest of the Sabbath in abstaining from secular employments, and freely worshiping God and hearing the Gospel, and deliberately searching the Scriptures, to ascertain whether what he hears is according to the word of God.

5 That in accordance with the principles of individual liberty and Christian union, it is the right and the duty of believers in Christ to maintain his worship and ordinances in such forms as they, under the teaching of his

word, his Spirit, and his Providence, shall judge to be in harmony with his will.

6 That as God has designed and given the Bible for the whole world, it is the right of every man throughout the world to learn to read the Bible; and that it is the right and the duty of all Christians to co-operate in the universal diffusion of the word of God: and that this Alliance will seek, by all proper means, to diffuse and maintain the principles of religious liberty above stated throughout the world.

7 That while the Evangelical Alliance admits into its bosom such persons only as are reputable members of evangelical churches, we are nevertheless persuaded that the great object of the Association, the promotion of a larger Christian union, may be furthered by a frank expression of our sentiments on the subject of slavery: we therefore declare our deep, unalterable opposition to this stupendous evil, and we hold it to be the duty of all men, by all wise and Christian means, to seek its entire extirpation and removal from the land. Still, the one object of the Alliance shall be steadily kept in view, which is the promotion of Christian union and brotherly love.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

This Organization shall be known as THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

ARTICLE II.

The object of this Association is to promote the design of the Evangelical Alliance, especially in the United States of America.

ARTICLE III.

Every member of this Alliance shall be a member of some evangelical Church, in good and regular standing; and may be introduced on his own application, by signing the Constitution, and assenting to the principles, the basis, and the objects of this Alliance.

ARTICLE IV.

The officers of this Alliance shall be a President, Vice-Presidents, Corresponding and Recording Secretaries, and a Treasurer.

ARTICLE V.

The business of this Alliance shall be conducted by a Board of thirty Counselors; any seven of whom, at a meeting regularly called, shall constitute a quorum; and all the officers and counselors shall be elected annually by the Alliance, shall be accountable to them and subject to their instructions, and shall hold their places till the election of their successors. All the officers enumerated in the

fourth article shall be *ex-officio* members of the Board ; who are empowered to fill their own vacancies, and who shall meet by the appointment of the Society, or on their own adjournments, or at call of the President by the request or with the consent of any five counselors ; provided, in the case of every special meeting, due notice for twenty days shall be given.

ARTICLE VI.

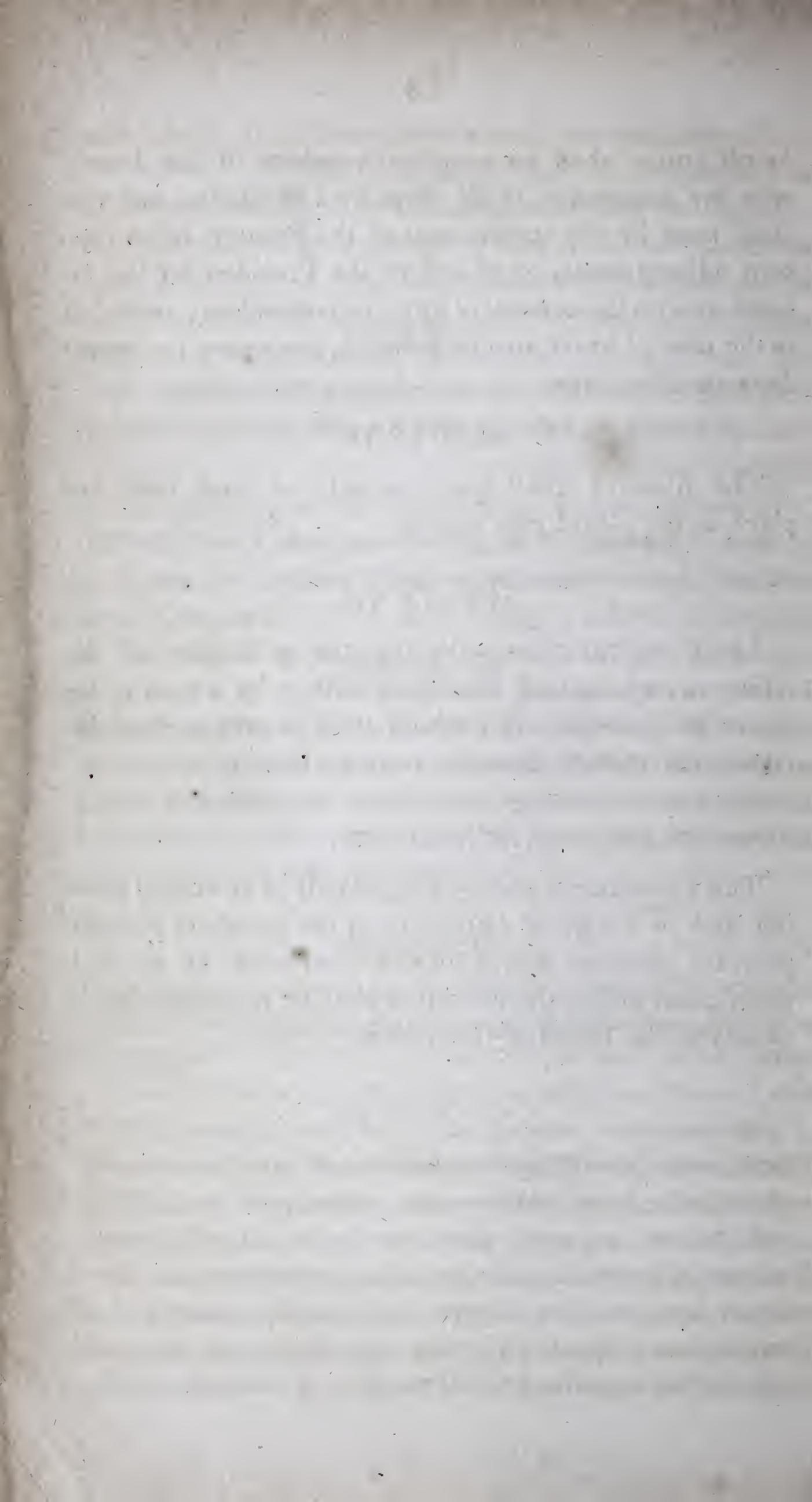
The Alliance shall meet annually, at such time and place as the Board may appoint.

ARTICLE VII.

Local organizations, adopting the principles of this Alliance, may become connected with it by a vote of the Board of Counselors, by which their members shall become, individually, members of this Alliance.

ARTICLE VIII.

This Constitution may be altered only at an annual meeting, and by a vote of two-thirds of the members present ; provided previous notice for one year shall be given in every case, unless the alteration shall be recommended by twenty of the Board of Counselors.



The following resolutions were passed by the Convention, and ordered by the Board to be published:—

Resolved, That the members of this Alliance are hereby authorized and requested to receive from other Christians, known to be in good standing in any evangelical denomination in our country, their assent to the basis, constitution, and principles, adopted by this Alliance, and to form Auxiliary Societies, who, on being acknowledged by a vote of the Board of Counselors, shall be members of this Alliance.

Resolved, That the genuineness of our professed union, as well as its moral influence on the world, requires that its dictates should be carried out into action; therefore, in furtherance of the grand design of the Alliance, it is recommended to the auxiliary organizations which may be formed, and to the individual members of this Alliance, to reduce the principles of Christian union to practice, by such various united religious exercises, and other means, as they may deem most conducive to the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

ADDRESS.

To all Christians of the different evangelical denominations of the United States, the Board of Counselors of the Evangelical Alliance send Christian salutations.

The division of feeling, and consequent restricted intercourse, among Christians of different evangelical denominations, have long been a source of real grief to the truly pious, and an occasion of offense to an ungodly world. To remove, or at least in a great measure to mitigate, these evils, a large number of pious individuals assembled in London, last August, and, after prolonged and prayerful deliberation, organized the Evangelical Alliance, with a

provision for district organizations in the different countries of the world. In pursuance of the recommendation of the London Conference, after necessary preliminary arrangements, at a convention of the friends of Christian union, held in New-York on the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 11th of May last, the organization for the United States was completed.

The Board of Counselors then appointed, deeply feel the weighty responsibility imposed upon them, in giving direction to the practical operations of the Alliance in this country, and would most ardently pray, that they may be divinely guided in the prosecution of the work intrusted to them. They would also most earnestly ask for the prayers and the co-operation of their brethren of the different evangelical denominations.

The permanent usefulness of this movement, as all must see, will much depend upon the practical application and carrying out of the principles upon which it is based. Let all the evangelical Christians, in the different towns and neighborhoods throughout the country, organize themselves into local associations, upon some simple plan, such as is herewith presented, for the purpose of sympathizing with each other and mingling their spirits in prayer. Let them meet at regular periods, and strengthen the bonds of Christian fellowship, and they will feel little disposition to cherish the petty bickerings which have, in too many instances, disgraced the Christian name.

Brethren,—Is not a more full, complete manifestation of the union of Christians contemplated by our Saviour, and by him made a means of the world's conversion? See John vii, 21.

Have not infidels and Romanists reproached us long enough with our feuds and jealousies? And does not the present condition of the world call loudly for united exer-

tions to spread the gospel of salvation ? The whole world is "groaning and travailing in pain together," looking for the blessings which only can be afforded through "the gospel of peace." Shall we not unite in diffusing these blessings ? Shall we not provoke each other to love and good works, and prompt each other to holy emulation in the spread of our holy catholic Christianity ? Shall we not show to the world that we have one common Lord, a common hope, and like precious faith—that we can bid each other God speed, rejoicing in each other's prosperity, and weeping over each other's faults ? O let us try to present a living example of the truth of those delightful words of the royal Psalmist : "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Let us meet often for Christian conference and prayer, and we shall then more fully feel that we are *one* : "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." Christians recognize a common birth, common hopes, and a common destiny ; why, then, should they not talk together by the way ? Let us no longer meet for angry disputation, but to salute each other in the name of Christ. When we meet, let it be to fan the flame of brotherly affection—to ask each other, "Is thine heart right as my heart is with thy heart ;" and then to go on together in the "chariot" of love. Let us "receive one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God."

As it will be seen in the organization, basis, and objects, of the Alliance, that the plan does not interfere with existing denominational arrangements, nor require any one to surrender what he believes to be revealed in the word of God—nor to keep silent upon subjects he considers important, though not included in the doctrinal basis—but merely when we treat points upon which we differ, that we do it in the spirit of love, in all things ruling our own

spirits: as we all believe that the church is *one*, consisting of all who truly hold Jesus Christ the Head, may we not confidently hope, that our brethren of the different evangelical denominations will promptly co-operate in an arrangement which is designed and calculated to unite Christians more firmly, and by exhibiting to the world our real *unity*, to increase the moral power and influence of the whole Church of Christ?

We are aware that there are honest and pious persons who are not prepared to unite with the Evangelical Alliance. But we are happy to perceive that their objections, in general, do not lie against the *principles* of the Alliance, but arise from doubts as to the *practicability* of its objects. Now what we wish is, that a multitude of successful experiments may immediately settle all these doubts. Experiment is the test of all theories. Let the theory of *Christian union* which we maintain be brought to this test, and we have no fears for the results. We must have far more desponding views than we are willing to entertain of the catholicity of our brethren of the evangelical churches of this country, before we can seriously doubt the *practicability* of their working harmoniously together in promoting the interests of our common Christianity, and in manifesting to the world their real *unity*. Brethren in Christ—and in the *common faith*—in the language of Robert Raikes, let us “try.” Asking the candid attention of our Christian brethren to these few suggestions, we will close this address in the language of the great apostle: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things.”

ISAAC LEWIS, *President.*

S. H. COX, *Secretary.*

PLAN FOR AUXILIARY SOCIETIES.

ARTICLE I.

This Association shall be known as the —— EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE, AUXILIARY TO THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

ARTICLE II.

The object of this Association shall be to promote union among Christians, upon the principles of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, formed May, 1847.

ARTICLE III.

The Officers of this Alliance shall be a President, Vice-Presidents, a Corresponding and Recording Secretaries, and a Treasurer.

ARTICLE IV.

The business of this Alliance shall be conducted by a Board of Directors, in which the several denominations which unite in it shall, if practicable, be represented—and of which the officers shall be ex-officio members.

ARTICLE V.

Any member of an evangelical church, in good and regular standing, may become a member of this Alliance, by signing the following declaration, namely :

“ I hereby signify my assent to the principles, basis, and objects of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States of America, and of the Constitution of said Alliance, and declare my desire to unite with Christian brethren in promoting its interests.”

ARTICLE VI.

The Board shall be governed, in the management of their business, by such by-laws as they may see proper to enact, not inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States of America.

ARTICLE VII.

There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Society, the time and place of which shall be fixed by the Board, at which the Officers and Directors for the year shall be elected.



